

PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release
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INSURANCE COMMISSIONER REMIND EMPLOYERS TO PAY WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUMS

CHARLESTON, WV – West Virginia Insurance Commissioner, Jane L. Cline, issued a reminder to West Virginia employers today that they will be subject to penalties and repercussions if they fail to pay workers' compensation premiums.

On January 1, 2006 the policies of all West Virginia employers subscribing to the Workers' Compensation Commission transferred to BrickStreet Insurance. There are currently 2,250 employers whose workers' compensation premiums owed to BrickStreet Insurance remain unpaid. If the premiums are not received by BrickStreet Insurance by February 24, 2006 the employer will be declared in policy default, will be placed on the Private Market Default List and be forced into the Uninsured Employers' Fund. We encourage those employers who have not complied to immediately contact BrickStreet Insurance to make payment arrangements.

"The Insurance Commission considers it absolutely critical that the exposure to the Uninsured Employers' Fund be limited," Cline said. "We continue to meet with other state licensing agencies to take coordinated action against business licenses and permits when an employer fails to maintain workers' compensation coverage."

The Insurance Commission may also take additional actions against uninsured employers such as imposing fines of up to \$10,000, filing injunction complaints in Circuit Court to cease business operations, and taking appropriate action against company owners and officers.

The Insurance Commission would like to emphasize that privatization of the workers' compensation system is a very positive step for West Virginia's business environment and will benefit all of its citizens; however, for the system to work it is imperative that employers do their part by complying with the law.

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